National Tribune.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."

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ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

Its Long and Arduous Service Graphically Described.

THE VETERANS' REUNION

In the City They So Gallantly Defended.

THE ANNUAL ORATION,

By Hon. Martin Maginnis, of Montana Territory.

There grows up in every army a body of men who, meeting on the field in all the emulation of good soldiership and in camp in all the glow of good fellowship, who, sharing to, gether dangers and pleasures, sorrow and joy, become bound forever by the ties of comradeship. They are inspired by one purpose; their regiment is their home; their army is their sanctuary; their country the world which they would die to save. Following all the campaigns surviving all its accidents, they become the representatives of the army and the witnesses who attest its history.

It is boasted that the best blood of the South was in their ranks. Well, the best blood and brains of the North were in ours. The intelligence and courage of the country were in all our armies. The orators of our pulpits, the lights of the bar, Senators and Representatives to-day were privates in the Army of the Potomac. The day has come when these, in the due order of time and nature, have taken their places in the control of private business and the direction of public affairs. And the time has come when they will tell the story of that army as it was, and not as it was misrepresented. It is a sad but glorious story of bootless efforts, useless sacrifices, and final success. Worn out in marches without object; wasted in battles that had no results; tainted with inactivity; baffled by interference and delay, it struggled, fought, and bled to victory. For as this was the people's war it turned out to be the people's fight. No Alexander, Cæsar, or Napoleon arose to monopolize its glories and claim its victories for himself alone.

THE ARMY AND NOT THE LEADERS.

So far as the Army of the Potomac was concerned, there never was an army that owed less to brilliancy of leadership or the inspiration of genius. What it lost was often from the latches of its direction; what it won it dearly paid for in its own patriotic blood.

We honor all our other armies—but this was the great army of the Union. It was confronted by the great army of the rebellion. It held the dragon by the throat while others struggled with the lashings of its folds. In the history of the war it is entitled to the right of the line. And we will devote this hour to the vindication of the discipline, the loyalty, the devotion and the undaunted heroism of the Army of the Potomac.

For it came to pass, that when the rebellion was fully organized, it abandoned its temporary seat at Montgomery, and placed its permanent capital at Richmond. It called its bravest knights and strongest champions to the Potomac, and placed the flower of its chivalry on the fields of Virginia. For the moral effect on the contending sections; for the eyes of all the world, and the recognition of foreign powers; for secession against the Union; for slavery against freedom, it said: "We stake our capital against your capital, and set our king over against your king on the black and red chessboard of war."

THE POTOMAC.

So here we stand on the banks of that river from which we have our name—in the capital we saved. A few hours from the capital we conquered. From Gettysburg, where the Confederacy was wounded, to Appomattox, where it fell, around us stretches the arc of a circle. The line of conflict—in ten campaigns and twenty battles—fought with terrific vigor, and attended with appalling loss, against our great antagonist, the Army of Northern Virginia, whose dashing cavalry, skillful artillery, and matchless infantry made the best fight for the poorest cause that is known to the annals of man; along this line, everywhere spotted with blood; in great patches ensanguined by stubborn battles; through the roar and smoke, summer's heat and winter's cold, surged the struggling armies, now drawn hither by the cry of "Rally on Washington!" and now pushed yonder by the shout, "On to Richmond!"

From here to Richmond is a hundred miles or more. The roads all cross a plateau which falls to the coast. Ten rivers run down across this benchland, and make as many lines of defense. The country is wooded, rough and difficult. Under the shadows of its thickets defensive armies can lie concealed; and he who would plunge into their recesses had reason to expect masked batteries and the chimera which our early imagination conjured up. Active, vigilant, hostile, the country people gave very little intelligence of the Confederates; and their friends in Washington flashed over the wires to Richmond the decisions of our Government before they were formulated, and the orders of our generals before they were transcribed. The invader, with one arm tied behind him for the defense of this city, must strike out with his offensive arm, and stagger on like a blindfolded giant attacking his one-eyed adversary. Mountain ranges parallel the lines of advance, affording cover for an enemy to turn the flank, or by threatening this city to divert the advance.

THE ARMY.

In July, 1861, an unorganized mob of companies regiments and batteries started out to make this march over another mob in a strong position. There was some good fighting at Bull Run, and we nearly stumbled into victory. Johnston's arrival made it a defeat. It took us three days to get there and one night to come back. We had some spare time, but did not waste it on the road. This is all prehistoric. I mention it as the first and last rout that occurred in Virginia; for in victory or defeat, success or repulse, never except in proper maneuvers, and in compliance with the orders of its generals, did the army that was thereupon organized or any of its great divisions ever turn its back upon an enemy.

ITS CRADLE.

Last year the Government bought the property of the Freedman's bank, north of the Treasury. On the corner next to Lafayette square stood a small brick house. This was the cradle of the Army of the Potomac. It has been torn down, and the grass grows as green upon its site as on the battlefields of that army which there had its first headquarters.

As the dead may rise to the trumpet of the angel, so the volunteers of the North rose at the call of Father Abraham. From towns unknown, States new carved, Territories new christened, they came to Washington. This little house was the workshop, where sat the chief artificer and his able helpers, and out of his rough product of the inexhaustible mines of patriotism they forged a blade fit for the mighty hand of freedom.

Here was organized brigades, divisions, and cavalry camps; the higher and more scientific branches of the army, the artillery, the engineers, the bridge trains, and the equipage necessary for movement under conditions new to war and peculiar to our country. The Administration, the general-in-chief, and his assistants displayed such skill and energy that in ninety days a line of defense was thrown around Washington, and over 100,000 men drilled, organized, disciplined—"a glory to the Administration and Nation," said its chief, "and worthy to take the name of the Army of the Potomac."

HOW IT FOUGHT.

That it would fight anywhere, and under anybody, let the shot-torn line and devoted divisions that dashed over the plains of Fredericksburg and carried their riddled colors and bleeding bodies to the very foot of Marye's Heights bear testimony. The desparate and hopeless vigor of that assault awakens the sympathy of the secure and chivalric enemy; and the indignant tears of Columbia will forever drop upon that sorrowful page of our history.

That mismanagement could not demoralize, nor any enemy disrupt it, was again shown at Chancellorsville. After another fragmentary battle it was withdrawn. It knew not why. "Foiled, but not fought;" repulsed, but not defeated; retiring, but not pursued—a steadfast army under a defeated general.

It was to endure another strain upon its metal, under circumstances more severe than the losses in these partial disasters—all its nine-months' men and thirty regiments of its two years' troops, veterans of all its campaigns, were mustered out. Lee gathered all the reenforcements available, and with a grand army moved again to the invasion of the North. We were recalled to defend its great commercial cities, and to make what turned out to be our last rally in defense of Washington upon the hills of Gettysburg.

THE RED FIELD OF GETTYSBURG.

Red and fiery through the morning mists arose the sun on the third of July. But before his rays had touched the red field, sharp canonading and the rapid roll of musketry on the right gave token that the combatants had resumed the bloody work which darkness had suspended. During the morning the right of the army succeeded in driving the Confederates from the lines which had been abandoned to them the night before. Thus auspiciously began the day.

Then came a long lull. The stillness of the morning was but occasionally broken by a picket fight. Even these died away on the warm air, and silence fell upon the battlefield.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by two signal guns from the Confederate lines, when, with an almost simultaneous roar, all their batteries opened, and a hundred and fifteen pieces of cannon poured a cataract of iron on the left center of the Union line. The artillery on our side was crowded into our shorter formation, which soon bristled with eighty guns of every caliber and description, and the earth trembled with the shock of two hundred cannon, not firing with the deliberation of siege ordnance, but with the fierce rapidity of field pieces at short range.

The roar was deafening. The scene was awfully sublime. Solid shot, shell, short bars of railway iron, spikes from improvised cannister; all things that could be rammed into and shot out of a cannon were tearing and plowing up the ground, and flying like legions of shrieking devils through the air; dismounting cannon, shattering limbers, bounding through the ranks, and piling around the batteries heaps of mangled horses and men.

THE AWFUL EFFECT OF THE CANNONADING.

Every now and then a well-directed shell would strike an ammunition caisson and cause a terrific explosion, scattering destruction for yards around, carrying fragments of wheels, timber, and bodies of men high in the air, and shooting up swift volumes of smoke to swell the sulphurous clouds now rolling up from every part of the field.

The brave cannoneers, stripped to the waist, their strong arms and brawny muscles covered with perspiration and powder-grime, unsheltered from the iron death that swept them off in numbers, worked their guns like Vulcans forging thunder bolts. The infantry were lying closely on the ground. The cannoneers were all that showed themselves. Once, indeed, a party of officers rode along some hundred yards in front to view the situation; and the waving tre-foil of the Second Corps' guidon told us that it was Hancock and his officers riding down between the lines.

All else sought shelter from the terrible storm of death. And, as you looked upon the prostrate battalions, closely seeking the shelter of the earth, and heard the deafening roar that shook the solid hills, and saw the wrathful clouds roll up the lurid sky, you thought of that dread day "When the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll, and men shall call upon the hills to cover them and the rocks to hide them."

At last, from the crown of timber on the opposite heights, emerged the attacking force, commanded by Pickett, Pettigrew, and others, and under the direction of Lee. Our people breathed easier, like men who had been set up as unresisting marks for thunderbolts, and who welcomed the more deadly grapple of the infantry, where blows could be given as well as endured.

PICKETT'S BOLD ASSAULT.

Over the ridge, line after line came forth, and closed up into a heavy order of battle, massed and directed upon our centre. Soon the fields were covered by the column which was to make the most famous assault since the final charge of the Old Guard at Waterloo. The blood-red Southern battle crosses waved in countless number above the steel-capped hosts; a cloud of skirmishers covered their advancing front, and their angry cannon still thundered over their heads to clear their way to the very heart of the Union.

Across the fields of two days' fighting, over the bodies of the dead and dying, closing the gaps made by our cannon shot, paying no heed to the sharpshooters, but raising the colors that go down, elbow to elbow in unbroken line, right gallantly they came on. Striking our advance posts, they roll them back to our main position—the head of the gentle slope, over which it seems they march unopposed. Suddenly from the ground rises the Union line, and as the word "fire!" rings down its ranks, a crashing volley is poured into the advancing columns, and men fall in swarths as if death had swept them with his scythe. A wild yell answers this defiance, and a rush to the onset is made by the whole body of attacking troops. With one unceasing roll the deadly musketry drowns other sounds, and the dull thud of desultory cannon can scarce be heard beating time to the rising music of the battle. The charging lines forget their bayonets, and are stung to replying to our fire. Their momentum is checked, but the column still moves on.

THE GALLANT REPULSE.

Pettigrew's division, which had farthest to come and over the most exposed ground, begins to waver under the heavier fire which it is obliged to face. Pickett's advance is still pretty well protected by the nature of the ground, but a gap between himself and Wilcox leaves his right to crumble under an oblique fire from Staunard's Vermonters and the direct reply of the two brigades of Gibbon's division directly in front. These flanks crowd in toward Pickett's center, protected by the formation of the ground, and give momentum to the wedge-shaped mass, which, headed by Armstead, moves up a hollow toward Webb's brigade at the angle of the line. This had also been the point of concentration of the artillery fire. Here were the dead men and dismantled guns of Brown's Rhode Island battery, and here Cushing, holding with one hand his torn-out vitals, fired with the other the last gun of the Fourth United States and fell beneath his smoking cannon. The other two brigades of Gibbon, their front relieved, began a voluntary movement to the right to aid their overcrowded comrades. So this becomes a general point of convergence for both sides. All without orders; for the struggle assumes the shape of a melee, and general direction is impossible except such as Federal and Confederate generals can give by voice and gesture. Gibbon and Hancock both fall among their men. Armstead, sword in hand, leads on his brave soldiers. With a rush his following gain the broken batteries, and the flag of a Virginia regiment is planted on the hot but silent guns. The great wave of the rebellion has reached a high-water mark and trembles, whether its crest shall break in fire upon the North or sweep back bearing upon the reflux the wreck of the Confederacy.

Now for the countercharge. It is headed by the corps headquarters' guard and some broken companies. Hall's and Harrow's men join in. Officer and private fight together, and courage is commander. Men and colors are trampled under foot as they fall beneath the fire of the Confederates who come up to hold what they have won. A rush, and the guns are recovered. The flag of Virginia goes down and the stripes and stars wave over the battery. A little below the great mass of the advance, with some sort of an alignment, has made a stand, and a deadly exchange of fire ensues for some minutes. Now Stannard's brigade swings down like a gate on the flank of the rebels. Those in the vortex see the movement through the smoke, and with renewed ardor push down in front with cheers and volleys. The magnificent column has broken into straggling groups. It requires more courage to run than to fight. Every battle-flag is still the center of a rally. The blue jackets still bear down. The masses go to pieces. The whole field can see that the bloody tale is told, and the cheers of victory ring from Round Top to the right.

THE EDUCATION OF WAR.

The high honors of the war fell to our educated soldiery. Middle-aged political generals could not compete with them, but many young officers who studied while they fought graduated in the school of war, masters not only of its practice, but of its written science. They took off their eagles and stars at the close of the conflict so thoroughly equipped in a now useless profession that in a new or more prolonged war some of them might have startled the world with generalship and soldierly capacity. These now commanded regiments, brigades and divisions, which they were competent to handle, in a wooded country where communication with headquarters was difficult. Under our new chief the army hopefully plunged into the wilderness. It met a bloody check—more bloody than usual, for it was in the very lair of the enemy. But it did not make the usual return to camp. Instead of retiring, Grant struck out by the left flank. He pounded Lee whenever he got a chance, and Lee struck back with interest. But the army which never had refused to stay with its leader now felt that it had a leader who would stay with his army.

LEE'S LAST ATTEMPT.

Then Lee tried to relieve Richmond by his old plan. He made a diversion on Washington. Early came rushing down the valley and reached the defenses of this city. Cabinet and Congress were sorely frightened. It required all Grant's courage and prestige to prevent the army being brought back from the James and the state of the war in Virginia returned to the situation of 1862. Lincoln, who ever stood between his generals and the politicians, called on General Grant to come to his aid, and the general came up from City Point and reenforced the President, with his demoralized advisers. The valley had been the road for the raids on this capital. It was the grain field of Virginia, and the generals we had kept there were aids to the Confederate commissaries. After some trouble with Halleck and the rest Grant got a man of his own. Then the clouds of shame and disaster which had overhung our arms were pierced by the luminous rays of one of the most brilliant reputations of the war, and the scene of Stonewall Jackson's fame became the field of Sheridan's glory. The road to Washington was forever closed, and the little gamecock of the Union armies stood crowing on the gate.

THE REST OF THE ARMY.

Our honored armies of the West were now everywhere successful. The magnificent Sherman had marched through Georgia, and the stride of his troops was over the Carolinas. The temerity of Hood was repressed by sturdy old Thomas. The extremities were paralyzed, and now came the final blow at the head and front of the rebellion—Sheridan's victory at Five Forks—the onset of the army—the capture of Petersburg—the fall of Richmond—which no one stopped to see. It was no longer "on to Richmond;" it was "on to Lee." The race for life or death came to its goal at Appomattox. The armies which had fought with a heroism never equaled, and a chivalry never surpassed, faced each other for the last time, and the Army of Northern Virginia, with a dignity worthy of its great deeds, laid down its arms and standards to its triumphant but magnanimous conquerer—the Army of the Potomac!

THE COST.

What had this victory cost? From May, 1861, to March, 1864, the losses of the Army of the Potomac were, in killed, 15,220; wounded, 65,850; captured, 31,378; in all, 112,448. From May 1, 1864, to April 9, 1865, killed, 12,500; wounded, 69,500; captured or missing, 28,000; aggregate, 110,000. From the beginning to the close of the war, killed, 27,720; wounded, 155,652; captured or missing, 59,378. A grand aggregate of 242,750. Adding those who died of gunshot wounds, the number of men who lost their lives in action in the Army of the Potomac was 48,902, probably one-half of all who died from wounds on the field of battle in all the armies of the United States. Add to this the deaths from disease and the discharges for disability, and you will see why we have so large a pension roll.

LINCOLN'S DEATH.

But another and a greater martyr was to fall beside the Potomac. In the midst of all our rejoicings our great friend, our President, was stricken down; the commander-in-chief of our veteran armies, the greatest in the world; the grand admiral of all the navies that guarded our coasts or ranged the distant seas. All the serried battalions, which would have laid down their lives, could not save him, or frigate or iron clad carry him over the river to whose brink we all must come. Like the humblest of his heroes—whose unknown face looked up from the sod—the man whose name shines on the rock of immortality, above the waves of oblivion and tides of time; the great central figure of the war stepped down from his high office into the cold waters of death, and disappeared on the shadowy shores of the hereafter.

But, comrades, the result is worth it all. Who could have dreamed that problems, involving not only the Government but society itself, could have been so soon and so satisfactorily settled? Romance and poetry will embellish and the ivy of time make picturesque the heroism of defeat; but every passing year will make more plain the decree of the God of battles that the lost cause was justly lost. Even now those who fought us glory in the strength and greatness of that nationality, which they proudly share and would willingly defend. They see the hand of Providence in the defeat of a cause that would have left America, like Europe, a group of warring States, and sharing in all its privileges and blessings, rejoice in the success of the war for the Union. This reconciliation and renewed allegiance—which conquering monarchies have failed to win in centuries of endeavor—is the glory of a republic.

PEACE.

Peace has been greater than war. The skillful hands of science have brought into use unknown powers of the air and mysterious forces of the earth, and the lovely hands of art are crowning our country with beauty. The numbers and wealth of our people have nearly doubled. So has our territory; for the condemned deserts of the West turn out to be granaries of bread and pastures of meat for the world. The forbidding rocks of old geographies have resolved themselves into mines of silver and gold, and under their frowning peaks are found parks, canyons, waterfalls, and geysers; the sublime glories of nature; the pleasure ground of mankind. The genius of America has united our distant coasts with bands of steel, and planted her feet on those blue precipices, which old explorers used to call "The land of the shining mountains, beyond the Western plains."

To this city, where they had met, the comrades of many years were called, that they might part. You crossed the Potomac, and turning your backs upon its banks marched in review up the avenue. That river of steel, wave after wave, passed the White House and moved by the Capitol, to break and part, and return to the utmost parts of the Union. But of all those whose tattered standards floated on the air, and whose triumphal music filled the heart with joy, how few there were of the faces that four years before had marched down that avenue the other way; had marched down to the battlefield, the hospital, the grave. How much vaster the shadowy hosts of the dead, whose pale memories moved with the column and kept time to the march. From scores of fields, consecrated by their deaths, forever sacred to their memories, they could not come, unless it shall be to meet us under the walls of a city more desired than Richmond, more resplendent than Washington, in the last Reunion of the Army of the Potomac.

[*For proceedings of the Reunion, see 2d page.*]

Reunion of the 122d Pennsylvania.

The One Hundred and Twenty-second regiment of Pennsylvania volunteers, which was composed very largely of men from Lancaster county, held their first Reunion in Lancaster, Pa., on the 17th inst., since their return from the war, twenty years ago. About three hundred members were present. They were escorted by the Grand Army Post to the Opera House, where very interesting exercises were held. Colonel Emlen Franklin, who commanded the regiment, presided, and, after prayer by Rev. Elam Kirk, the chaplain of the regiment, addresses were delivered by Allen Lovell, of Huntingdon, and J. Davis Duffield, of Philadelphia, Dr. J. S. Smith read the history of the regiment. In the evening the veterans had a banquet in Mænnerchor Hall. Judge Fell, of Philadelphia, was a member of the regiment, but was unavoidably absent.

A Ladies' Auxiliary in New Haven.

A Ladies' Auxiliary was organized on the 9th inst. in Benedict's Building, New Haven, Conn., with forty-six charter members. The following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Allen D. Baldwin; Senior Vice-President, Mrs. C. B. Dyer; Junior Vice-President, Mrs. C. B. Foster; Secretary, Miss Ida Beecher; Treasurer, Mrs. L. C. Goodrich; Chaplain, Mrs. Clark Buckingham; Conductress, Mrs. David Sharp; Guard, Mrs. L. Arnold. After the officers were elected Capt. George M. White addressed the meeting.

Reunion of the Sixth Wisconsin Battery.

Comrade N. B. Hood, Lone Rock, Wis., writes us that the Sixth Wisconsin battery, of whose members Henry Dillon Post, No. 2, is largely composed, will hold its eighth annual Reunion at that place on June 19th, 20th, and 21st. The citizens have purchased grounds, and are fitting them up for the boys. Comrade A. P. Clayton, Commander of Dillon Post, will be manager.

No Trouble to Swallow

Dr. Pierce's "Pellets" (the original "little liver pills") and no pain or griping. Cure sick or bilious headache, sour stomach, and cleanse the system and bowels. 25 cents a vial.

THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

Kilpatrick's Cavalry on the March Through Georgia.

THE FORAGERS AT WORK.

Life-Like Pictures of the March Through the Country.

SAVANNAH INVESTED.

Communicating with the United States Fleet.

[*By J. B. Kilbourne.*]

III.

General Sherman caused the fine depot at Millen to be destroyed and other damage to be done to the town, and on the 3d of December resumed the march direct to Savannah by the four main roads. Three corps now moved down the narrow space between the Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers, while General Osterhaus, with the Fifteenth, marched on the right of the latter stream in two columns some miles apart. General Howard was in person with this corps, and met with no resistance. Indeed, from Millen onward the whole army made rapid progress, with no special opposition. The cavalry proceeded by the left and rear flank, protecting the transportation from the dash of Wheeler's forces, which persistently followed us. He frequently attacked the rear-guard while crossing the numerous streams, but more generally, after the Waynesboro' affair, kept a respectful distance and soon crossed to the left bank of the Savannah.

HOW THE FORAGING WAS CONDUCTED.

The great majority of the infantry that followed, destroying the railways, worked both day and night in marching, bridging streams, in making corduroy roads through the numerous swamps and low grounds, in lifting wagons and cannon from mud-holes, and such as had this work in hand saw little or nothing of the people or the country, and knew but little of the work of the foragers, except to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Their system of foraging varied from that of the cavalry. They made regular details each day with wagons, that were sent forward of the columns early in the morning, observing the line of march, and when their wagons were filled joined their several commands as they passed; during the last half of the march our own small wagon train was with that of the infantry, and only twice did we see it to draw rations after leaving Milledgeville.

The officers' mess was in charge of their servants, carried on pack-mules, which followed in rear of the column of this brigade. We seldom stopped to feed our horses during the day, and only watered them as we had opportunity. Two meals a day sufficed for both man and beast.

During the afternoon each colonel would send out along the flanks small details from each company—from six to eight men in charge of a sergeant—as foragers. These, after loading their horses with fresh meat, bacon, chickens, corn-meal, sweet potatoes, sorghum molasses, corn and fodder, would return and distribute the same to their mess, and if they had not a sufficient supply for night and morning, would go out again. It frequently would be late at night before our foragers got in, and sometimes they would lose their way in the darkness and fall into the hands of the enemy.

MR. STUBBS AND HIS BLOODHOUNDS.

Except in very few instances, private residences were not destroyed by the army; but there was at least one exception, and for an excellent reason. We came one day to the plantation of a notorious rebel—a Mr. Stubbs—who kept a large number of slaves and a pack of bloodhounds to track our escaped prisoners from Millen and Andersonville. Here we stopped, and, as he had plenty of forage, fed our horses bountifully and shot his bloodhounds—for it was a rule with the army to kill everything in the shape of bloodhounds that powder and ball could reach. Stubbs also kept a small supply store, and the soldiers helped themselves to bacon, sugar, sorghum, flour and meal, sweet potatoes and other vegetables. He boasted loudly of what he had done and was still willing to do for the Confederacy, and as before reaching the cross-road our advance had been fired upon by his order, as we were told, when the column moved out, his house, store-room, cotton and cotton-gin, press, corn-racks, stables, and everything that could burn was set on fire.

Senator B. H. Hill had told the people of Georgia "that every citizen with his gun and every negro with his spade and ax could do the work of a soldier." All demanded that we should be assailed "front, flank and rear;" that provisions should be destroyed in our advance, so that we would starve; that bridges should be burned, roads obstructed by falling timber, and no mercy shown us. Judging from the tone of the Southern press of that day, which we often saw, the outside world must have supposed us ruined or lost.

It is impossible and even vain to hope that a great war can ever be conducted without abuses and cruelty being inflicted, and we may congratulate ourselves that the wrongs done were almost without exception to property, and that murders, rapes and other heinous personal offenses were nearly unknown, while responsible persons addressed specific complaints to the Confederate war secretary at Richmond charging murder, rape, robbery and pillage of the most scandalous character against their own troops.

YANKEE FEET ON THE SACRED SOIL.

As a general thing the weather was nearly perfect, and not unlike our Indian summer. Only for a day or so had we seen flakes of snow falling, and that shortly after leaving Milledgeville; and now, as each day brought us nearer the coast, the weather became even sultry and spring-like. As we gradually approached Savannah, and the distance between the Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers grew less, the cavalry advanced to the front, and when about twenty-five miles below Sisters' Ferry, made a halt during the day, waiting to hear from General Sherman, during which time General Kilpatrick and three of his staff procured some sort of water-craft and crossed the Savannah River, as they said, to "Set Yankee feet on the sacred soil of South Carolina." They attempted to burn a building at the landing, but before accomplishing their object were fired upon, and came near being captured before regaining their boat. Daily, more or less of the soldiers of the division became dismounted by reason of their jaded horses giving out, or being shot in battle; and to repair these daily losses, an officer, with a detail of men, would usually be sent out to gather up horses for the re-mounts. These were distributed through the companies as required; for, when one of these faithful animals gave out, the orders were that they be shot, so that not a single hoof might be left behind to fall into the hands of a hostile people.

A TOUCHING INCIDENT.

I well remember a very touching incident that occurred soon after our engagement at Waynesboro'. During the first year of the war a soldier enlisting in the cavalry could, if he desired, furnish his own horse, for the use of which he received extra monthly pay, and, if killed, the Government price, which was then $100. A sergeant of mine had a brother in the Fourth Ohio volunteer cavalry, who had taken into the service a horse which the two brothers had raised from a colt, on their father's farm. After the capture of Atlanta, his term of service having expired, he was mustered out, and not being able to get transportation for him, brought him over to our camp and gave him to his brother, then my orderly sergeant. He was a fine animal, an easy rider, well broke to military movements. "Doc," as they called him, was quite a pet among the boys and was called the veteran of the regiment, having served the Government faithfully for three years, and then honorably discharged with his rider, whom he had carried safely through many a hard-fought battle, without wound or accident. So, whether in the field, on the march, or in camp, our horses usually were side by side, and they naturally became very much attached to each other; indeed, when separated, they became very restless and uneasy, and if let loose, each would soon find his mate by his familiar whinnies; for I believe among so many horses they recognized each other more by sound than by sight. On the morning referred to, I had in my command fourteen horses (poor creatures) that could go no further, and had been ordered to be shot. Doc was one of the number. Before leaving Marietta, and while we were following up Hood's army, then in our rear, Doc had, in some way, badly calked himself; from the effects of which he had not entirely recovered at the time we left Atlanta, but by careful usage had been kept along until now, when it became evident he could go no further.

General Wheeler, who so persistently followed us by day and by night, bivouacked that evening near us, just over on the opposite side of a cypress swamp, and, to avoid giving an alarm by firing small arms so early in the morning, orders were issued to dispatch our unserviceable horses with the hatchet.

DEATH OF "DOC," THE VETERAN.

At assembly the fourteen doomed horses were led out into line, with Doc on the right. They were soon dispatched and their halters taken off; and as we moved I noticed that they lay side by side as they had fallen.

Company I, of the Tenth, led the advance of the Second brigade that morning. The division then numbered about 5,000, and when marching in column extended about four miles from right to rear. I was riding behind the colonel and his staff, with only a company in front of us as advance guard. As we got an early start, and usually moved at a brisk walk, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon we must have been twenty miles away from camp,—while the enemy marched on a parallel road to our left,—when suddenly the boys in the rear began to cheer. Looking back, I saw Doc, the veteran, only a few steps behind, coming up on my left at full gallop, covered with foam. When opposite to me, he settled down to a walk, taking his accustomed place by the side of my horse. His head was covered with blood, and the brain was oozing out from his broken skull. His eyes were closed and he was apparently suffering great pain; but now that he had found his mate and taken his place in column, he seemed satisfied. The colonel, seeing the horse, inquired what was the matter with him. When informed, he ordered me to draw my revolver and shoot him. I said, "Colonel, I can't do it;" and turning around to my orderly, I saw the tears in his eyes. Poor fellow, something seemed to choke him, for he could not speak. I asked him to shoot him and put an end to his misery; but he shook his head; and for a full half hour, while no one seemed willing to put an end to his misery, that poor beast hobbled along with us, laboring hard to keep up. It seemed that he had not received a death blow, and after we had left, came to life again, found us gone, settled upon the direction we had taken, started in pursuit, and passing thousands of horses in column, had at last, by his acute animal instinct, found his mate, and, notwithstanding his extreme suffering, taken his accustomed place in column with as much confidence and certainty as if his rider had been upon his back. Miles away from his lonely and restless mate, Doc found rest that night forever. He belongs to the long roll of forgotten heroes.

THE YEAR OF JUBILEE HAD COME.

From the commencement of the campaign to the last, great numbers of negroes attached themselves to the column and accompanied the march. This was contrary to the wishes of Sherman, who felt the embarrassment of having thousands to feed from the country in addition to those who must be fed as we moved; but those who had less responsibility generally encouraged the slaves to leave their plantations. The natural result was that the regular bivouacs of the troops were fringed by numberless gipsy camps, where the negro families, old and young, endured every privation—living upon the charity of the soldiers generally, and helping themselves to what they could glean in the track of the army foragers. On the march they trudged along, making no complaint, full of a simple faith that "Massa Lincoln's men" were leading them to abodes of ease and plenty. As the lower and less fruitful lands were reached the embarrassment and military annoyance increased. This was more particularly felt by the left wing, which was then the only one exposed to the attacks of the enemy. Losing patience at the failure of all orders and exhortations to these poor, ignorant people, General Davis, commanding the Fourteenth Corps, ordered the pontoon bridge at Ebenezer Creek to be taken up before the refugees who were following that corps and the cavalry could cross, so as to leave them on the further side of that stream, and thus disembarrass the marching troops. Kilpatrick's division brought up the rear, and the men of each regiment, as they came up, dismounted and led their horses over. I remember that strong guards were stationed at the bridge, and that each officer had to get a written permit for his private servant to cross. The Tenth regiment, being rear-guard, was the last to cross, and as we came up were waiting our turn. Although the night was dark, through the dense fog and smoke, by the light of a thousand camp-fires along the bank, could be seen hundreds of these refugees gathered about the burning pine knots, singing their old familiar plantation songs, so plaintive and pathetic; but no song rang out with so joyous a swell as when the boys joined in the refrain, "As we were marching through Georgia."

PHARAOH AND HIS HOSTS.

Wheeler was following close on our rear, and it was well-nigh midnight before the rear of the Tenth was over. Then the pontoon was at once taken up, leaving the poor and defenseless people on the opposite bank. I shall never forget the cries and lamentations that went up when they saw that they were cast off and at the mercy of the enemy so close in their rear. As we advanced in the darkness we could hear them singing that appropriate song of "Pharoah and his hosts." It would be unjust to General Davis to believe that such a cruel order would have been given if the effect had been foreseen. These poor creatures had their hearts so set on liberation, and the dread of falling into the hands of Wheeler's men was so great that, with wild wailings and cries, the great crowd rushed, as if stampeded by fright, into the water—those who could not swim as well as those who could—and many were drowned in spite of the earnest efforts of the soldiers to help them. The loss of life was great enough to prove that there were many ignorant people to whom it was literally preferable to die freemen than to live slaves. It was said that such as could not make their escape were either killed or made captives the next morning by Wheeler's men.

While resting our horses at the river, Kilpatrick opened communication with General Sherman, and the next morning resumed the march. The country for miles around was low and unproductive, and dense pines lined the road. During the afternoon we ran against the advanced pickets, who, after a slight brush, retired to their outer lines about Savannah.

APPROACHING SAVANNAH.

On the 9th and 10th of December the Second Corps reached and closed in and around the defenses of Savannah—the Fourteenth Corps on the left, extending to the river, the Twentieth Corps next, then the Seventeenth Corps, and the Fifteenth on the extreme right, thus completely investing the city. Savannah was then a city of about twenty thousand inhabitants, situated fifteen miles inland from the ocean, built on a sandy plateau some forty feet above the water, on the Georgia side of the river, and had been the home of a well-to-do people. It was an old and beautiful place;—its streets were perfectly regular, crossing each other at right angles, and at many of the intersections were small inclosures in the nature of parks. Both streets and parks were lined with handsome shade trees. In the rear of the city was a large park with a fountain, upon which soldiers were camped; between it and the courthouse stood a handsome monument, erected to the memory of Count Pulaski, who fell in 1779, in the assault made on the city at the time it was held by the English during the Revolutionary war. Outside of the city there was very little to interest one. A little way out on either side the land sank away almost to a level with the sea. The whole coast is low and cut up into islands by deep canals and creeks, and the roads leading into the city are narrow causeways built high enough to be out of water when the surrounding rice fields are flooded.

DRAWING THE LINES AROUND THE CITY.

General Wm. J. Hardee's force, which then occupied the city, consisted of about fifteen thousand men. Such was the situation in Savannah, when, on December 10th, the army closed in on the works around the city. A day or so had been spent in getting the several corps into position, but on the 12th the investment was complete, with the left on the Savannah, while the right extended around on the south and east to the Ogeechee River, near King's Bridge, a structure a thousand feet long, which the enemy had destroyed; the forts, however, were still standing, and, under the direction of General Howard's chief engineer, the bridge was rebuilt, and was ready to cross on the 13th. General Sherman had his bivouac near the Louisville road, about five miles from the city, and invested the place at every available point. During this time the cavalry had moved around down towards the right, and for two days had been resting their horses. On the 12th Kilpatrick moved his division around to King's Bridge, and the next day as soon as the last plank was laid we crossed over and moved down towards the coast to open up communication with the fleet. That night we camped about three miles down the coast on the Clay plantation. It belonged to a brother of Henry Clay, who, with his family, on our first approach on the city, had refugeed south on the Gulf road, leaving his beautiful plantation on the bay in the care of a few trusty servants. Kilpatrick and staff quartered at this house, which was surrounded by a beautiful grove of mulberry trees. It was a bright moonlight night, and we sat for hours on the high banks along the bay, looking down on the still waters.

Fort McAllister was still below, and as Kilpatrick had asked permission to attack the fort on our way down the bay, we were anxiously waiting for the hour to come, but Sherman, thinking that our artillery was not heavy enough, the next morning ordered General Hazen's division to cross and march rapidly down the right bank of the Ogeechee and, without hesitation, to assault and carry the fort by storm. On the following morning, with Murray's brigade, Kilpatrick was sent to open communication with the fleet towards St. Catharine's Sound. He felt of the fort as he passed.

[*To be continued.*]

Reunion of Michigan Prisoners of War.

The annual Reunion of the Union Prisoners of War Association of Michigan will be held at Greenville, Montcalm county, Mich., June 13 and 14. A general invitation is extended to all Union prisoners and veterans to participate. The exercises will consist of speeches, the singing of old songs, a parade, and banquet given by the ladies of the city. A good time guaranteed.

Reunion of Sanitary Commissions.

George H. Stuart, who was president of the U. S. Christian Commission, has issued a call for a Reunion of the members of the Christian and Sanitary Commissions and Federal and Confederate chaplains on July 22, at Ocean City, New Jersey.

Among the Follies of the Age

which the introduction of SOZODONT long since exploded was the use of abrasive and corrosive tooth preparations, which either contained minerals which scratched their enamel, or acids which dissolved it. SOZODONT, a health-promoting substitute for these empirical articles, is a botanic, skillfully prepared, highly sanctioned preparation, which not only beautifies, cleanses and invigorates saffron-colored and defective teeth, but divests the breath of an abjectionable odor and restores to it that of health.